IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1 to 5, 10 to 12 and 14 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Please amend the remaining claims as follows:

1. to 5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) An ink jet recording apparatus ~~according to either one of claim 1 or 2~~, comprising:

a recording head for discharging ink from a plurality of discharge ports and recording onto a recording medium;

a carriage on which said recording head is mounted and which reciprocatively scans on said recording medium;

recording medium conveying means for conveying said recording medium in the direction perpendicular to a scanning direction of said carriage by a predetermined distance each time said carriage reciprocatively scans on said recording medium;

an ink tank mounted at a position where it does not exercise an influence on the reciprocative scan of said carriage and the conveyance of said recording medium by said recording medium conveying means;

an ink supply tube for supplying the ink from said ink tank to said recording head; and

control means for controlling an ink discharge state of said recording head on the basis of an image signal which is inputted from a host apparatus,

- 2 -

wherein said control means adjusts a non-recording time as a time during which no ink is discharged from said recording head so as to recover a pressure in said supply tube; and

wherein when the number of dots of ink to be discharged ~~of the ink which is discharged~~ from said recording head per unit time, in which said number has been calculated from said image signal, is equal to or larger than a reference discharge number, said control means determines that the negative pressure in said supply tube has increased.

7. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein when a print duty is equal to a predetermined value, said reference discharge number is equal to a discharge number in which it has previously been confirmed that no recording variation occurs.

8. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said reference discharge number is equal to a reference discharge number calculated on the basis of an ink flow rate and a presumed negative pressure calculated by a predetermined pressure calculating equation.

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to ~~claim 4~~ claim 6, wherein the increase in negative pressure in said tube is detected by a pressure sensor provided in said pressure smoothing tank.

10. to 12. (Cancelled)

- 3 -

13. (Previously Presented) An ink jet recording method in a recording control method for an ink jet recording apparatus comprising:

a recording head for discharging ink from a plurality of discharge ports and recording onto a recording medium;

a carriage on which said recording head is mounted and which reciprocatively scans on said recording medium;

recording medium conveying means for conveying said recording medium in the direction perpendicular to a scanning direction of said carriage by a predetermined distance each time said carriage reciprocatively scans on said recording medium;

an ink tank mounted at a position where it does not exercise an influence on the reciprocative scan of said carriage and the conveyance of said recording medium by said recording medium conveying means;

an ink supply tube for supplying the ink from said ink tank to said recording head; and

control means for controlling an ink discharge state of said recording head on the basis of an image signal which is inputted from a host apparatus,

wherein said method has a step of extending a non-recording time as a time during which no ink is discharged from said recording head when a calculated number of dots of ink to be discharged from said recording head per unit time, in which said number has been calculated from said image signal, is equal to or larger than a reference discharge number.

- 4 -

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to ~~either one of claim 12 or~~ <u>claim</u> 13, wherein said reference discharge number is equal to a reference discharge number calculated on the basis of an ink flow rate and a presumed negative pressure calculated by a predetermined pressure calculating equation.